

NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS



IN CHARGE OF

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THE SALT-FREE DIET IN EPILEPSY.—The *New York State Journal of Medicine* says: "Italian physicians have made a study of the influence of the salt-free diet and the reduced salt diet in the treatment of epilepsy. Their conclusions, quoted in the *Practitioner*, are to the effect that the salt-free diet notably diminishes in all epileptics the number and violence of attacks; in some cases they were kept away for months. The reduced salt diet only diminishes the number of fits. To reduce their violence and number to any extent, it was only necessary to give, at the same time, small doses of bromide. In the milder forms of epilepsy the salt-free diet is sufficient to diminish and even to suppress the disease for a long time, but in the more severe forms bromides must be given as well. A salt-free diet by itself or in combination with bromides, even when kept up for some years, does not produce on the patients any disturbance of the general condition, either of body or mind."

QUASSIA IN INEBRIETY.—Dr. T. D. Crothers, of Hartford, Connecticut, stated at a meeting of the Medical Society of Virginia that an aqueous solution of quassia, two ounces every hour, given for a day or two before an expected spree, will destroy the craving for drink and even render it distasteful.

REMOVAL OF ADHERENT STRIPS OF GAUZE.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association*, quoting from *Centralblatt f. Chirurgie*, says: "Lauenstein takes hold of the end of the strip of gauze with forceps, and, instead of pulling it out, twists it continually on its axis. His experience has been that this loosens up small regions of adhesions at a time, and the final removal of the gauze is then an easy matter, even after a Mikulicz tamponade."

THE FEEDING OF YOUNG CHILDREN.—The *New York Medical Journal*, in a synopsis of an article in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, says: "Potts thinks few subjects have been more studied and discussed in

recent years than that of the feeding of infants under one year of age, and that few matters of importance have been more neglected than their feeding at a later stage. Errors in feeding at the latter period arise from want of appreciation of two important principles: 1. The capacity for salivary digestion is at first altogether wanting, and even later in childhood tends to be deficient. 2. The teeth, as soon as they appear, require proper use. As to the first of these, salivary digestion being difficult, starchy foods must be given in a very digestible form. Thorough mastication must be taught and encouraged, the food being therefore given in as dry a form as possible. As soon as the incisors are through the gums, the first step should be taken to discontinue liquid diet. Crusts and bones may be given to encourage mastication. Also raw apples and nuts, and the farinaceous food should be given in a semi-solid form. Overeating must be guarded against."

NATURAL DISINFECTION OF THE INTESTINE.—The *Medical Record*, in an abstract of a paper in the *Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift*, says: "Moro points out the inadequacy and undesirability of attempts at intestinal disinfection by the administration of antiseptic drugs, or even of calomel, and emphasizes the desirability of devising some method which should be in harmony with the natural defensive forces of the organism. The stool of the breast-fed infant presents as its predominating bacterial component the *Bacillus bifidus* of Tissier and the extreme activity and great vitality of this organism enable it rapidly to overgrow all other bacteria that may be present in the intestine. The author has found that a most efficient means of ridding the gut, both of children and of adults, of undesirable bacterial guests consists in the administration of human milk. In a surprisingly short time the *Bacillus bifidus* will have overgrown all of its competitors. While at present the method is difficult of application on account of the scarcity of breast milk, it seems likely that it will be possible to discover the particular substance in this fluid which is so advantageous to the organism in question, and in that case the problem might be simplified."

THE CARE OF THE ABDOMINAL WALLS AFTER DELIVERY.—The *New York Medical Journal*, quoting from a German contemporary, says: "Brose believes that the abdomen should be bandaged immediately after delivery in order to prevent relaxation of the abdominal muscles, and bring the muscles back into their proper position."

SIX WEEKS IN BED, says *American Medicine*, was the old treatment for acute articular rheumatism. Six weeks in typhoid, six weeks in iritis, six weeks in gonorrhœa at its best, and six weeks in so many other infections, all suggest that perhaps here there is the basis for some kind of a generalization. Perhaps the organism really requires six weeks to gather its forces and manufacture its supplies to defeat an army of invading parasites of certain species and repair the damage they inflict. It is a thought well worth following up. Even if there is no such general law possible, it is a good rule to impress upon patients even in the most trivial complaints—a cold—an influenza—a depression from overwork.

METHYLENE BLUE IN INOPERABLE CANCER.—Dr. Abraham Jacobi reports in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* the effects of methylene blue in many cases of cancer in which operation was impossible. His results were satisfactory in relieving pain, prolonging life, and producing such improvement that the patient was enabled to attend to the ordinary business. He does not think that he has ever cured a case, yet one man has been under observation for four or five years, and one woman for eight or nine. He has commenced to expose the patient to sunlight as an auxiliary to the drug.

LOCAL ANESTHESIA.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association*, quoting from the *Buffalo Medical Journal*, says: "Clinton is of the opinion that certain cases of profound sepsis, notably empyema and local abscess of the abdomen, are more safely attacked under local anesthesia. In order to satisfy his own mind as to the relative importance of the solution used, or the manner of using it, he had a patient prepared for a double herniotomy. With a large syringe and a small needle the skin was infiltrated with plain sterile warm water. Next the fatty tissue was blown up, and then an incision was carried to the external oblique. The patient did not feel any pain. By ballooning up each layer of muscle and fascia with warm water, and massaging it before it was cut, it was found that anesthesia was as complete as if a strong cocaine solution had been used."

ACTION OF TEA ON TYPHOID BACILLUS.—The same journal, in a synopsis of an article in the *Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps*, says: "As the result of an investigation of the action of cold tea on the typhoid bacillus, McNaught found that after four hours' contact the

organism diminished greatly in numbers, and that after twenty hours it could not be recovered from cold tea. The tea was prepared by pouring about one litre of boiling water on three heaped-up teaspoonfuls of tea. The tea was allowed to infuse for ten minutes. McNaught suggests that cold tea may be used as a substitute for water in soldiers' water bottles on active service."

ABORTIVE TREATMENT OF BOILS.—The *New York Medical Journal* has the following: "A method of checking the development of furuncles has been described by Vikentiev (*Vratchebnaya Gazetta*, through *Le Bulletin médical*). If the treatment is applied early, the boil will proceed to dry up after one intervention. The method is described as follows: Apply a solution of soft soap in alcohol, which is then to be washed off with alcohol, and a small piece of absorbent cotton wet with the same solution is placed on the surface until the liquid has evaporated. The region is again to be rubbed with the tincture of soft soap (made with potash), and the latter is allowed to dry on the surface. In the great majority of cases this is all that is required, and the furuncle aborts without further treatment. The method is also useful with furuncles already advanced in their development, as it reduces to the minimum the extent of the purulent collection."



"Our strength grows out of our weakness. Not until we are pricked and stung and sorely shot at, awakens the indignation which arms itself with secret forces. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of deceit; has got moderation and real skill.

"The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than theirs to find his weak point. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is against me, I feel certain of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me, I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor."—*Emerson*.